

Purpose of the Michigan Quality Program Standards for Youth Mentoring and the Standards Checklist

Mentor Michigan and its Providers Council believe it is vital for Michigan's mentoring programs to operate with the highest possible quality, so the Michigan Quality Program Standards for Youth Mentoring were developed. The standards are in place in order for youth to receive the most beneficial and productive results from a mentoring relationship. The standards will help parents and guardians as well as those running mentoring programs understand what quality mentoring looks like.

The standards are not meant to certify or accredit mentoring programs. They provide a planning and assessment framework that raises the bar for mentoring programs. The standards provide a basis for each program (board, staff, and other constituents) to make a conscious comparison and determination of how the Standards will best meet the needs of youth and families in their service area.

The purpose of this Standards Checklist is to provide youth mentoring programs with a tool for self-assessment. As programs work to continually improve their operations and services to the communities they serve, this checklist can provide benchmarks for progress. Programs should use this instrument to determine areas of potential improvement needed and also to identify those components of quality youth mentoring that are strengths of the organization.

The Mentor Michigan Providers Council, a body of 20 mentoring experts from across the state, drafted the standards from best practices developed by national, state, and local organizations. First Gentleman Daniel G. Mulhern presented the standards and gathered feedback from mentoring professionals throughout the state at four Regional Trainings in the summer of 2005. Feedback was also gathered from mentoring programs that were unable to attend a Regional Training. The feedback was incorporated and the Standards were finalized by the Mentor Michigan Providers Council in October 2005.

Key Points

- The standards are meant for programs to use internally; Mentor Michigan is not monitoring programs.
- Programs may choose to use information from the standards when making funding requests either to highlight their strengths or to backup their argument for the need for funding.
- The Michigan standards are inline with national standards (Elements of Effective Practice by the National Mentoring Partnership) and those produced by other state partnerships. They are research based.
- Efforts are being made to educate funders on the standards to assist them in making their funding decisions.
- The Mentor Michigan Census collects data on how the standards are utilized. These statistics can be found at www.mentormichigan.org . Programs can compare their progress on meeting the standards to other programs. This may assist in making a case to a funding source.
- The standards will be reviewed every three years by the Mentor Michigan Providers Council.